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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Project Location

The USFWS and CDFG will acquire from Cargill Salt, 15,100 acres of industrial solar salt ponds and/or associated salt-making rights in south San Francisco Bay, California. Under terms of the acquisition, the USFWS will own and manage 8,000 acres of "Alviso Ponds," the 1,600 acres of "West Bay Ponds." The CDFG own and will manage 5,500 acres of "Baumberg Ponds." The Alviso Ponds consist of an 8,000-acre complex of 25 ponds on the shores of the South Bay in Fremont, San Jose, Sunnyvale and Mountain View, in Santa Clara and Alameda Counties. Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve and Charleston Slough border the acquisition area on the west, on the south by Moffet Naval Air Station, Sunnyvale Baylands Park and to the east by Coyote Creek and Cushing Parkway in Fremont. Major drainages which discharge into San Francisco Bay within the complex area include Charleston Slough, Mountain View Slough, Stevens Creek, Guadalupe Slough, Alviso Slough (Guadalupe River), Artesian Slough, Mud Slough, and Coyote Creek. The complex includes three "Island Ponds" surrounded by Coyote Creek and Mud Slough.

The West Bay Ponds consist of a 1,600-acre complex of 7 ponds on the bay side of the Peninsula, on both sides of Highway 84 west of the Dumbarton Bridge, bayward of the developed areas of the City of Menlo Park in San Mateo County. Bayfront Park is located to the west, and the Dumbarton Bridge approach and the UPRR are located at its southern border. Ravenswood Slough discharges to the Bay through the complex.

The Baumberg Ponds consist of a 5,500-acre complex of 23 ponds on the shores East Bay, west of Hayward and

Union City in Alameda County. The approach to the San Mateo Bridge and the CDFG Eden Landing Ecological Reserve, form the northern boundary of the acquisition area. Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel and the Coyote Hills form the southern boundary. Major drainages that discharge into the San Francisco Bay within the complex include Old Alameda Creek and Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel.

Project Description

The proposed South Bay Salt Ponds Initial Stewardship Project is intended to provide for management of the ponds from the time management responsibility is transferred by Cargill to the USFWS and CDFG until a long-term restoration and management plan for the South Bay is completed. It is anticipated that the planning and design process for long-term restoration, and thus the duration of the ISP, will require at least five years.

The objectives of the proposed South Bay Salt Ponds Initial Stewardship Project include:

1. Cease salt production;
2. Circulate bay water through the ponds and introduce tidal hydrology to ponds where feasible;
3. Maintain existing open water and wetland habitat for the benefit of wildlife, including habitat for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl and resident breeding species;
4. Maintain ponds in a restorable condition to facilitate future long term restoration;
5. Meet all regulatory requirements, including discharge requirements to maintain water quality standards in the South Bay.

Proposed changes to existing operations include:

1. Circulating bay waters through reconfigured pond systems and releasing pond contents into the Bay. The plan will require installing new water control features, consisting of intake structures, outlet structures and

additional pumps to maintain existing shallow open water habitat.

2. Managing a limited number of ponds as seasonal wetlands, to reduce management costs and optimize habitat for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl.

3. Managing different summer and winter water levels in a limited number of ponds to reduce management costs and optimize habitat for migratory shorebirds and waterfowl.

4. Restoration of three ponds to muted tidal or full tidal influence.

5. Managing several ponds in the Alviso system as "batch ponds", where salinity levels would be allowed to rise in order to support specific wildlife populations.

Installation of all proposed water control structures is anticipated to require several years to complete. After water control structures are installed for individual pond systems, intake of bay water into ponds and initial release of pond contents into the Bay will generally begin the following March to May time period when salinities within ponds and in the Bay are at their lowest. During the initial release period, the discharge salinity from the pond system may be significantly higher than normal Bay salinity. Three levels of maximum initial release salinity conditions are proposed in Table 1. Ponds were designated for a particular salinity group based on the historic operation of the salt operations and system constraints on changes to the existing salinities. Salinity group 1 ponds would have a maximum initial discharge salinity of 65 parts per thousand (ppt). (Seawater is approximately 32 ppt.) These ponds are generally intake ponds or ponds near intakes with the lowest existing and historic salinities. Salinity group 2 ponds would have a maximum initial discharge salinity of 100 ppt. These ponds are in the middle range of the ponds in the acquisition. Salinity group 3 ponds would have a maximum initial discharge salinity of 135 ppt.

TABLE 1.—SALINITY GROUPS

Salinity group	Maximum initial discharge salinity	Alviso complex ponds	Baumberg complex ponds	West Bay complex ponds
Group 1	65 ppt	1A1, A2W, A2E, B1, B2, A3W, A3N.	1, 2, 4, 7 10, 11	
Group 2	100 ppt	A5*, A7*, A8* A9, A10, A11, A14.	5, 6, 1C, 2C, 3C, 4C, 5C, 6C.	
Group 3	135 ppt	A12, A13, A15, A16, A17, A19, A20, A21.	6A, 6B, 9, 8A, 8, 12, 13, 14.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 5S, SF2

* These ponds would have a maximum initial discharge salinity level of 110 ppt.

For Alviso systems expected water depths in most of the ponds will be 1

to 2 feet on average, similar to their existing condition. Average water

depths in the Baumberg systems will range from zero to about 2.5 feet in